

are responsible for ensuring that their subordinates have the opportunity to practice their religion. Under no circumstances can they deny military personnel the freedom of religion.

Military Chaplains are staff officers with specialized training and specific responsibilities for ensuring the free exercise of religion. They advise and assist leaders and individual personnel on matters of faith and conscience, especially in a hostile environment. We must support our chaplain corps to help military personnel who desire it to achieve a proper faith based mindset.

The Honorable Representative Sam Johnson of Texas is a former Vietnam prisoner of war. He recently mentioned his faith helped him through the hardships of his years of captivity. In Vietnam, as a young infantryman, I witnessed countless soldiers saying prayers before missions. In Iraq, I heard many of our National Guardsman praying before performing our Convoy Combat missions. The importance of a faith cannot be understated.

Our country's distinguished military history gives ample testimony to the need for a faith-based character. Every combat veteran understands the basic requirements for readiness are not only their training and their equipment, but also a prepared mind, heart, and soul to face the enemy. An individual's beliefs assist our military personnel on the battlefield. Faith helps us face the horror and challenges of battle.

In combat, ethical choices are not always easy. The right thing may not only be unpopular, but dangerous as well. Complex and frightening situations often reveal a person's character. Faith-based ethical behavior helps prevent atrocities during battle and soldiers and Marines have demonstrated a duty-consciousness that ultimately enforces a standard of moral decency. The moral courage to do the right thing in the midst of chaos and violence stems from the belief in a higher power.

Mr. Speaker, living a faith and ethics go hand in hand. Ethical decisions are made every day in military organizations throughout the world. They include decisions that directly affect the lives of military personnel in the field, innocent noncombatants, military civilians, and contractors in the theatre of war. I encourage my fellow colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to make value and faith-based ethical choices for the good of the Nation. As members of Congress it is our duty to have the strength of character to make the right choices that ensure the protection of individual natural rights rather than taking them away.

RECOGNIZING DAVE ROSS

HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dave Ross of Muncie, Indiana. Dave is the Chairman and CEO of National Catastrophe Adjusters, Inc., doing business as NCA Group, which is a leading provider of insurance management services. Incorporated in 1984, the company originally specialized in catastrophe claims management, handling claims throughout the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. NCA Group currently serv-

ices both daily and catastrophe claims for 5 of the top 10 carriers in the United States and the second largest insurer in Canada. NCA Group has since expanded its service offering well beyond that of a traditional catastrophe firm, providing a complete suite of claims service solutions.

As a veteran, Mr. Ross knows the importance of service to his community and country. He employs over 300 people in Indiana's 6th Congressional District and all over the country, including a large number of veterans. Mr. Ross has developed a very unique and beneficial program for veterans returning back home that helps them translate their military experiences and traits into private sector skills. He then employs many of those veterans at NCA Group or recommends them highly to positions elsewhere.

I recognize Mr. Ross' exemplary conduct as both a soldier and citizen. He truly has used his time and talents for the betterment of his fellow Hoosier and American.

COMMEMORATING THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT AT THE ERIE-OTTAWA COUNTY INTER- NATION AIRPORT

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, this month marks the dedication of the new Erie-Ottawa International Airport in Port Clinton, Ohio. This new facility has been made possible through the Port Authority's leadership and the sacrifices and dedication of local citizens who understand what it takes to build a strong community and nation. Their contributions, along with a \$1.7 million federal Airport Improvement Grant, have resulted in adding an important new facility along our precious Lake Erie coast for economic growth.

To celebrate this event, citizens gathered during Veteran's Day weekend to mark this historic occasion at the new hanger. At the invitation of the airport's dedicated and visionary Director Stan Gebhardt, all gathered witnessed the first flight from Pelee Island, Canada. The plane was piloted by Griffing Flying Service president Tom Griffing, with passengers Erie County Commissioner Tom Farrell and Ottawa County Commissioner Jim Sass who worked across county lines to bring new growth potential to our coast. Upon landing, they were greeted by numerous local, state and federal officials as well as members of the public who marked the occasion with a special ceremony.

In honor of the occasion, a new US flag was flown over the U.S. Capitol for presentation to the Airport Authority. Let me offer warmest congratulations to all those who piloted this significant project to completion. The new facility and adjacent buildings will allow for improved air service, more hanger storage, expanding commercial development around the airport's perimeter, and enhanced opportunities for tourism and commercial development. May the years ahead bring new opportunity as well as adventure to those who recognize Ohio as America's state where air flight began. Onward and upward!

BOOTS AND HOOVES—HOUSTON AIRPORT SYSTEM'S AIRPORT RANGERS

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if a person is traveling down Farm to Market Road 1960 in Houston, Texas and glances over toward the massive airport grounds, it will not be uncommon to see men and women on horseback providing security for the airport perimeter. These are the Houston Airport Rangers. They will be celebrating their 10th anniversary on December 7, 2013.

In 2003, the Houston Airport System and Texas horse riding enthusiasts embraced the concept of a citizen-based crime prevention program designed to add an extra layer of security at the fence-line securing George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH) and in return, horse enthusiasts would have exclusive access to thousands of acres of riding trails. Kind of like border patrol, just with boots and hats and on horseback!

IAH Airport is the only airport in our country with a dedicated volunteer rangers program. It's Houston's largest airport and the eighth busiest airport in North America. In 2012, nearly 40 million passengers traveled through the airport. More than 13,000 acres surround the airport, so it makes sense to have the right folks saddle up and patrol the trails on a regular basis.

The number of rangers has increased every year, and nearly 100 members have qualified for an Airport Ranger badge. Rangers share a passion for patrolling the range and keeping the peace—this passion has created a spirit of camaraderie amongst members. As Rangers ride their horses along the airport perimeter, they alert TAH security personnel of any suspicious or dangerous activity in their patrol area. Rangers keep track of their patrol hours—thousands of volunteer hours have been recorded since the program launched ten years ago. These Rangers are a special breed. But, would we really expect anything less from Texans?

Mr. Speaker, join me in honoring the Airport Rangers program for its 10 years of dedicated service and commitment to make Harris County, Texas a safer place to live. I do not know of another crime prevention program of this caliber that is completely run by volunteers. Next month, they will celebrate their 10th anniversary with a Texas style celebration: Texas country music, barbeque and horseback riding—sounds like heaven.

Happy Trails, y'all.

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PROFESSIONAL OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS

HON. ALAN GRAYSON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding program for young

adults in Central Florida and throughout the state. The Professional Opportunities Program for Students, Inc. (POPS) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization founded by Florida State Senator Gary Siplin in February, 2001.

Senator Siplin had a dream to provide summer job opportunities to high school students in his community and he began that dream with five students. As the need for jobs increased, the graduation rate of students in the community began decreasing. Senator Siplin realized he needed to do more for these young people.

In 2008, POPS received a grant from the Department of Education to provide a year-round program that included mentorship, life skills workshops, community service, and paid internships to 200 students in Orlando, Florida. By 2010, POPS had grown to serve over 400 students and six additional cities: Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Pahokee/Belle Glade, St. Petersburg, Bartow/Lake Wales, and Ft. Lauderdale.

The mission of POPS is to provide personal and professional development for teenagers who face social, economic or environmental barriers that may impact the quality of their lives. POPS' work is rooted in collaboration among students, parents, schools, and community and business leaders.

The primary goal of the POPS program is to motivate diverse at-risk students to complete their high school education and prepare them for future success. POPS strives to reduce some of the at-risk factors through mentoring, counseling, character education, money management, and workforce development training. To achieve these goals, POPS focuses on assisting students in the completion of high school, motivating them to pursue an advanced education and obtain gainful employment.

The POPS program helps monitor demonstrable gains in academic achievement as well as increased attendance and graduation rates. POPS staff and mentors work to help achieve reduction in disciplinary actions and dropout rates and to increase engagement of students in education, cultural, and career experiences.

Through mentor relationships, improved parental involvement, and on-the-job-training and career exploration, the POPS program helps prepare students for college and entry into the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to recognize Florida State Senator Gary Siplin and the POPS program for their invaluable contributions to Florida's youth.

RECOGNIZING AUDREY DECKINGA

HON. JOHN R. CARTER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate Audrey Deckinga on her retirement from Texas Child Protective Services. Over her 39 years of service to the Lone Star State, she has shown an unwavering commitment to the well-being of our most vulnerable citizens.

Audrey started her journey in the field of child welfare over 30 years ago as a foster parent. After beginning her professional career in CPS as a caseworker in Williamson County

in 1988, she rose through the ranks over the next 25 years to become the leader of a CPS statewide program with over 8,000 staff. She has served as Assistant Commissioner since 2009 and has impacted the child welfare arena on both state and national levels.

Under Audrey's advocacy and leadership, more children are served safely without a removal from their own homes. Adoptions have increased by more than 100%. After exiting the system, children are less likely to have a subsequent incident of abuse or neglect or to reenter state custody. These achievements bring to life the words of Fred Rogers, one of our nation's great champions for children, who said, "Justice is taking care of those who aren't able to take care of themselves."

Her work to do right for children doesn't stop at the end of the work day. Audrey remains involved in numerous state and national child welfare groups where she has developed a reputation as a forward-thinking supporter of policies that make a lasting difference in the lives of children.

Retirement is to be celebrated and enjoyed. It is not the end of a career, but rather the beginning of a new adventure. I commend Audrey Deckinga for her work improving the lives of families in Texas. I wish her only the best in the years ahead.

THANKING EMPLOYEES OF THE OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT AT ARMS FOR THEIR SERVICE TO THE HOUSE

HON. CANDICE S. MILLER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the House of Representatives to pay tribute to eight outstanding and long-term employees of the Office of the Sergeant at Arms who will be retiring in the upcoming months:

John Boardman—Chamber Security Division staff.

Geraldine Cassidy—House Garages and Parking Security Division Staff.

Dennis Engel—House Garages and Parking Security Division Staff.

Karen Forriest—Identification Services Division staff.

Nicarsia Mayes—Chamber Security Division staff.

Linda Shealy—Emergency Management Division, Executive Assistant.

Bill Sims—Director of Chamber Security.

Lee Trolan—Emergency Management Division, Director, Continuity Planning.

Taken as a group, these exceptional public servants have served the House of Representatives and the federal government for a combined total of 242 years. I know we are deeply grateful to each of them for their many years of hard work, diligence, and sacrifice to this institution.

Taken individually, each has held positions of trust and responsibility within the Office of the Sergeant at Arms. From the Floor of the House, to the House Office Building garages, to the Identification Office, and Emergency Planning, their commitment to the Congress is second to none. Their institutional knowledge and skills, honed through years of hard work

and dedication, will be sorely missed by their colleagues, as well as by Members and staff alike. Every single one of them has much to be proud of as they reflect on long and distinguished careers.

Please join me in commending the outstanding service of John Boardman, Geraldine Cassidy, Dennis Engel, Karen Forriest, Nicarsia Mayes, Linda Shealy, Bill Sims, and Lee Trolan to the Congress of the United States and congratulating each on their retirement. On behalf of the U.S. House of Representatives we wish each of you well in all of your future endeavors.

CELEBRATING KEOGH HEALTH CONNECTION'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KYRSTEN SINEMA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Ms. SINEMA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating Keogh Health Connection's Tenth Anniversary. This milestone represents a decade of excellence in connecting Arizona's uninsured population with affordable health care.

Keogh Health Connection was established in 2003, inspired by the passion for service held by its founders, Karlene and Kevin Keogh. This couple recognized that the available healthcare resources can only help those in need when people know how to access them. Through working with families and individuals on a case by case basis, and making referrals to an increasing number of partner organizations, this non-profit has shown tremendous growth over the past decade. It has served over 200,000 residents of Maricopa County, a number of which are in my district.

By taking action to fill a critical need in its community, Keogh Health Connection is truly commendable. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this organization and its staff on reaching 10 years of service, and in wishing them many more successful years to come.

IN MEMORIAM: FRANCES XAVIER SOLOMON, II

HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands—and all the Pacific territories—lost a friend in August. Mr. Francis Xavier Solomon, II, veteran and public servant, passed away.

Mr. Solomon's service to our country ranged from his tour of combat in Vietnam to his career with the Department of the Interior. There, he helped develop telecommunications infrastructure in the islands and the financial management systems our young governments needed.

In his last 13 years he worked as a consultant to the Prior Service Retirement Trust Fund, which provides a pension to former employees of the U.S. Government in Micronesia.